



General Assembly

Distr.: General
29 April 2009

Original: English

Sixty-third session
Agenda item 49
Sustainable development

Letter dated 28 April 2009 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the joint statement of Heads of State — founders of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS), which was adopted on 28 April 2009 in Almaty, Kazakhstan (see annex).

I would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 49.

(Signed) Serik Zh. Zhanibekov
Chargé d'affaires a.i.



**Annex to the letter dated 28 April 2009 from the Chargé
d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the
United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

[Original: Russian]

**Joint statement by the Heads of State of the founding nations of
the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea**

The Presidents of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan met in Almaty on 28 April 2009.

In an environment of mutual understanding, trust, friendship and constructive cooperation, the Central Asian Heads of State discussed matters connected with the operation of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, established in 1993 with the aim of taking joint practical action and planning future programmes to overcome the effects of the Aral Sea crisis and to improve the environmental and socio-economic conditions of the Aral Sea basin.

The Heads of State of the founding nations of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, hereinafter referred to as "the Parties", recalling the centuries of neighbourly links between their countries, founded on common history, culture and traditions, mutual support and strategic partnership serving the fundamental interests of the peoples of the region and rooted in a rich experience of fruitful collaboration, and expressing a common desire to move relations between their States to a higher level;

Desiring to provide mutual assistance and support to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to improve the environmental and socio-economic conditions of the Aral Sea basin;

Noting that the development of mutually advantageous collaboration among the States of Central Asia is important to ensuring sustainable development and regional security;

Taking into account climate change, the rapid deterioration of the glaciers and snowfields of the region and the rising demand for water caused by population growth and economic development in the countries of the region;

Noting the significance to addressing the problems of the Aral Sea basin of the efforts of the countries of the region towards integrated use and conservation of water resources and combating of desertification and soil degradation;

Attaching great importance to implementation of the projects established within the framework of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, taking into account the interests of the countries of the region;

Considering that use of the water resources of the Central Asian region must take account of the interests of all of the founding nations of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea and must comply with all of the universally recognized principles of international law;

Considering the work undertaken by the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea and by its constituent bodies to strengthen regional cooperation for the improvement of the environmental and socio-economic conditions of the Aral Sea basin;

Welcoming the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly resolution of 11 December 2008 regarding observer status for the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea in the General Assembly;

Grateful to the specialized agencies of the United Nations, the international financial institutions, donor countries and other development partners for their assistance and support to the countries of the region in addressing the problems of the Aral Sea basin;

Inspired by the common desire to make a substantive contribution to overcoming the effects of the crisis in the Aral Sea basin,

Have adopted the following statement:

1. Noting the positive significance of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, which, through its activities, has enabled the major issues connected with cooperation to overcome the effects of the crisis in the Aral Sea basin to be coordinated and addressed, the Parties will contribute to further action and to the development of cooperation with entities of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and other international organizations;
2. The Parties express their readiness to further refine the organizational structure and the treaty basis and legal basis of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, with the aim of making its action more effective and increasing its cooperation with financial institutions and donors for the purpose of implementing projects and programmes connected with addressing the problems of the Aral Sea basin;
3. The Parties entrust the Executive Committee, together with the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination and the Intergovernmental Sustainable Development Commission of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea with engaging national experts and donors to develop a Programme of Action for 2011-2015 to assist the countries of the Aral Sea basin for subsequent consideration and adoption by the founding nations of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea;
4. The Parties will continue collaborating to improve the environmental and socio-economic conditions of the Aral Sea basin;
5. The Parties reiterate their commitment to developing a mutually acceptable mechanism for the integrated use of water resources and for environmental conservation in Central Asia, taking into account the interests of all the States of the region;
6. The Parties confirm that the constructive discussions held in Almaty in a spirit of openness and mutual understanding have made a substantial contribution to furthering the traditional neighbourly links and mutually advantageous collaboration among the founding nations of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea to address the problems of the Aral Sea basin;

7. The Heads of State affirm their gratitude for the warm and cordial welcome extended by President Nazarbayev of the Republic of Kazakhstan on hospitable Kazakh soil.

Almaty, 28 April 2009